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ABSTRACT

Articles in this monograph reflect the fact that English teachers see reading and literature as closely related. The opening essay, "Reading Is Non-Linear," provides the theoretical base for a comprehensive approach, drawing on current psycholinguistic theory. "Toward Comprehensive Reading Programs in Secondary Schools," reviews current issues and debates in reading instruction and also calls for a program that avoids extremes in both philosophy and pedagogy. The "how-to's" of reading and literature programs are addressed in "Nothing Improves Reading Like Reading; But You've Got to Get Them to Do It First." The article, "The Multidimensional Literature Program," argues that reading/literature teachers must draw on a variety of teaching techniques, not just one or two. Classroom talk is dealt with in "Talk Is Cheap," which further shows how the application of the ideas of William Glasser can contribute to literature lessons. Strategies for constructing individualized reading programs are provided in "Stationing as a Reading Management Technique." A workshop approach to teaching writing that actively engages students in reading is discussed in "Teaching Critical Reading in the Writing Class." The article, "Every Teacher Is a Teacher of Reading," states cogently that teachers in all subject areas must take responsibility for helping their students with reading skills. The final article, "Parent-Teacher Cooperation Pays Off," shows that the concern for reading can extend beyond the schools. (HOD)

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READING

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INTRODUCTION

This monograph may be mis itled. It might more accurately be called READING AND LITERATURE IN THE ENGLISH CLASSROOM, reflecting the fact that English teachers, in general, and the contributors to this collection, in particular, see reading and literature as closely related.

For too long teachers of something called "literature" have toiled away at their "great books," ignoring another group of teachers, people penned up in a remedial "laboratory," who drill students on the skills of something called "reading." The lit teachers wonder why their discussions are so poor, why students come to class not seeming to have comprehended (or sometimes even examined) the assigned material; the reading teachers are frustrated that their students never seem to make a connection between the workbook exercises and the real world. In the meantime, the other teachers in the building, the administrators, and the parents all shake their heads and wonder why nobody teaches Johnny and Jane to read.

Reading and literary study are not dissimilar, not in aims, not in processes. In teaching, one must attend to both the act of decoding and the processes of comprehending and responding. In the opening essay, "Reading Is Non-Linear," James Stalker provides the theoretical base for this kind of comprehensive approach, drawing on current psycholinguistic theory. His concern for a solid theoretical underpinning for literacy programs is echoed by Gerald Duffy and Laura Roehler in "Toward Comprehensive Reading Programs in Secondary Schools," where they review current issues and debates in reading instruction and call for a program that avoids extremes in both philosophy and pedagogy.

Most of the remaining essays deal with "nuts and bolts"--the "how to's" of reading and literature programs. Martha Fuce suggests, "Nothing Improves Reading Like Reading; But You've Got to Get Them to Do It First." My own contribution describes "The Multidimensional Literature Program," as I argue that reading/literature teachers must draw on a variety of teaching techniques, not just one or two. Mary Freydl's "Talk Is Cheap" deals with that most difficult area of teaching, classroom talk, and shows how the application of the ideas of William Glasser can contribute to successful literature lessons. Linda Banovetz is interested in constructing good individualized reading programs and shares some of her strategies in "Stationing as a Reading Management Technique." Susan Judy draws two other English areas together by describing "Teaching Critical Reading in the Writing Class."

The final two essays imply that even a revised title for this book, one emphasizing reading and literature <u>in the English classroom</u>, might be too narrow.

In "Every Teacher Is a Teacher of Reading," Marybeth Carduck Rudzinski states cogently that teachers in all subject areas must take responsibility for helping their students with reading skills. And Elaine Williams shows that the concern for reading can extend beyond the school and that "Parent-Teacher Cooperation Pays Off."

Biologists use the term symbiosis to describe a state in which two different organisms live together in harmony, each providing for the needs of the other, each surviving because of the care of the other. It seems time that the fields of reading and literature (and, more important, that teachers of reading and literature) become truly symbiotic through the sharing of aims, ideas, methods, techniques, and, of course, successes. In the spirit of promoting that symbiosis, the title of this volume remains one word, not several. The title refers to a global process that is common to such diverse people as the first grader enjoying some nursery rhymes, a junior high student prepping for a history exam, a senior high student getting ready to earn a driver's license, an adult enjoying a Harlequin romance, and a scholar puzzling over Shakespeare's First Folio. The word--the process--is

Reading.

--Stephen Judy
Publications Chair
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"If we think of it, all that a University, or final highest school can do for us, is still but what the first school began doing--teach us to read."

--Thomas Carlyle
The Hero as Man of Letters

READING IS NON-LINEAR

James Stalker
Michigan State University

Linguists long ago discovered that language is a collection of subsystems and that language users rely on combinations of these subsystems to communicate or receive a message. In spoken language, the subsystems are usually organized into phonology (the sounds of the language), syntax (the ordering of the sounds into morphemes, the smallest meaning units, and into phrases and clauses, the larger meaning units), and paralinguistic features (gestures, voice tone, relative loudness, facial expression, body stance and other such features). In written language, the systems are the same except graphemes (letters) replace phonemes (sounds), and the paralinguistic features are absent or replaced by punctuation marks, layout on the page, and accompanying photographs or drawings.

The interesting differences among theories of language structure are centered almost entirely on the explanations of the relationships among these subsystems of language. All theories must take these subsystems as necessary parts of language which have explainable connections to each other. The explanation of these connections distinguishes the theories and finally influences the theories teachers of language in use accept as the framework for teaching reading, writing, literature. As we examine language theories, we can categorize them according to several different features, and one of the most important is whether the theory explains language as a linear or non-linear process. Traditional linguistic explanations assume that reading language is essentially a linear process, that is, one starts at the left of the page and processes each unit, letter or word, sequentially. To do otherwise, the linear approach maintains, lessens comprehension. For example, in the sentence, "I ate Mom's apple pie," a proficient reader visually perceives and verbally comprehends, I before he processes ate. Mom's then follows, and sequentially and individually apple and pie. The assumption of linearity implies that the reader cannot efficiently understand the sentence if he reads only some words "ate Mom's pie" or the words in a different order than presented, such as "Mom's apple pie I ate." Contemporary linguistic theories often reject the notion of linear processing and favor a non-linear explanation. Transformational theory is a good example. At one level, transformational theory acknowledges linearity in postulating that the immediate data we perceive (sound or visual) is a surface representation of a deeper structure which contains the meaning of the communication. When we process language, we use this surface representation to determine the deep structure, the meaning of the communication. Effective language processing then is analysis of surface structure to discover the deep structure underlying it for the deep structure contains the interpretable meaning.

However, the process is linear only in the sense that we go from surface to deep structure. A non-linear model best explains the details of the process. We do not in fact analyze the meaning of an utterance or sentence by first analyzing the sounds (the phonological systems), then the words (the morphological system), then the sentence structure (the syntactic system), then the meaning (the semantic system). We use all or part of each of these systems at different parts of our interpretative analysis. As we search for meaning, we recognize and use the complex interrelationships among these systems.

Rather than delve into the complexities of transformational theory I will use two examples, one from language acquisition and one from adult language use, to illustrate non-linearity in language processing. Transformational theory and psycholinguistic research postulate that in acquiring language children compare the language data they receive with a model which they devise and then process. I will bypass an analysis of the exact source and form of the child's model, because both are controversial philosophical issues and best discussed at length elsewhere. I am concerned here with the practical results of the model with regard to learning and using language, spoken and written. According to the transformational model, language learners are constantly processing data through a model which enables them to make their own generalizations about the patterns of the language. In a simplified scheme, they assess data received, postulate a phonological and/or syntactic and/or semantic pattern, test the pattern through use (initially oral), compare the pattern with data they continue to receive, revise the pattern to fit the new data, and move to new patterns. The ultimate result is proficient speech or proficient reading, listening, or writing.

Such a model explains aspects of language learning which a linear model cannot account for. No one ever receives consistently complete or accurate language data. Normal conversational discourse, the kind the child will be primarily exposed to, contains incomplete sentences, shifted tenses, ambiguous pronoun references, non-syntactic and semantic structures, and interrupted discourse among many other "flaws." Furthermore, the child receives something less than all possible combinations of syntactic and semantic structures of the language. We can reasonably account for children's ability to learn language only by postulating that they view, in some manner, the data they receive as systematic, and for which they must induce the organizational principles particular to that language.

If we assume that children are using a "systems" approach to language learning, we can begin to see that they use data from one subsystem to verify or reject a postulation about another system. Once they realize that language is a manipulative tool, that it means something, they begin to understand that certain patterns of sound directly affect their world. Even before they have clearly established the adult sound patterns of this language, they realize in their receptive language that the groups of sounds they hear must be patterned into words or morphemes which in turn are connected with each other through syntax. Newly acquired syntactic structures allow the acquisition of new phonological units, further refinement of the sound relationships of the language, and acquisition and refinement of the child's simultaneously growing semantic system.

To use a common example, children learn the proper phonology of irregular past tense verbs early, then shift to regularization of all verbs--that is, they pronounce them wrong--then change back to standard irregular forms. The acquisition process is roughly as follows: first, children acquire two semantic concepts as a single phonological unit as they hear it--"tore" for instance. At this point, we have no evidence that they are aware of the syntactic relationship between "tear" and "tore." Second, they acquire new syntactic structures, among them the tense marking systems required for verbs in English; that is, they become aware that "tore" and "tear" are related in syntax as well as semantics. At this point, the children are aware that tense exists separately from the verb form, i.e. tear + past or present. On the basis of this new realization and their knowledge of how words are pronounced, they postulate a general rule for the pronunciation of past tense, /t/, /d/ or /id/ depending on which sound precedes it. Then they over use the general rule, thus losing their former proper irregular verb pronunication, "tore," in favor of the more general rule which produces "teared." Finally, children realize that not all past tense markers follow the general rule, and once again they acquire the individual exceptions, "tore," of course, being one of them. What appears to be "regression" in learning--from "tore" to "teared"--is non-linear learning in the sense that the children are first using phonological data, then syntactic data, then phonological and morphological data. It is linear in the sense that they are moving from a simpler language to a more complex language. They now possess a very useful rule applicable to all verbs; they don't have to memorize each one independently, only those that are irregular.

In adult speech we find similar evidence for non-linear language processing. When listeners react to the sentence, "He is having dinner now," in a manner which indicates that they understand it, we cannot reliably state whether the listeners used syntactic, semantic or phonemic cues to extract the meaning "present progressive" from the sentence. The syntax provides the verb structure is + have, semantics provides now, and morphophonemics provides /in/. All three mean the same thing, the notions we associate with "present progressive," ongoing action. We can perceive three surface structure cues for one deep structure meaning; such a plethora of cues is labeled redundancy, a necessary part of language. The writer must insure an adequate level of redundancy, but the reader needs only one or two of the cues to determine the deep structure.

We can apply this view of language as a non-linear system to the process of reading in the two ways suggested by the examples just given. First, we can expect children to acquire the language of reading in a manner analogous to the way in which they acquire spoken language, except that they already possess complex generalizations about spoken language when they start learning written language. They already possess a goodly portion of the language they will encounter in reading. Second, we can expect them to sample the data presented on the page, but we cannot presuppose which particular subsystem they will use to determine the meaning on the page.

The comparison of learning to speak with learning to read suggests an interesting view of initial reading. If reading is going to be language processing, rather than simple linear oral production, beginning readers will learn that they need all basic subsystems operating concurrently if they are to extract meaning from the text. For example, if they rely only on the relationship between

phonology and graphemics, they cannot acquire effective meaning. The phonological (or graphemic) unit, "the boy" means nothing and everything until we know that it is followed by "runs" or "friends." It is not the additional phonological data which adds more meaning; it is the syntactic data contained in the relationship between "the boy" and "runs" or "friend." Or another example: The phonemic-graphemic data tells us next to nothing, in comparison to the syntactic data, in the two sentences, "The man signs his name" and "The signs all say stop" with regard to "signs." If children could somehow be forced to attend to only graphemic (phonemic) data, they could not possibly extract the appropriate meanings for "signs" from the two sentences. We can reasonably expect, then, that beginning readers will use--certainly should use--the subsystems of language simultaneously, just as we expect them to use these systems simultaneously in speaking.

How do we know which systems readers are using or not using while they are reading? We can listen to the kinds of errors they make. That is, we can listen to how they alter the language on the page when they produce it orally. Perfect oral readers tell us nothing about what is going on in their heads while they are reading. Readers who present an oral version different from the written version (and we all do on occasion) tell us something about the processes operating in their heads while they read.

Try this experiment. Write the following sentence in complete English spelling.

th mn ts lttc n hs sndwch

Approximately 33% of the visual data is missing in this sentence yet all respondents can produce most of the sentence in normal English spelling. How? Through knowledge of the syntactic and semantic data which they already know and which supplies data not contained in the graphemics. 50% of "eats" is missing, yet the remainder of the sentence confirms the assessment that it is a verb, and the semantics suggest that it is probably "eats" or at least in that category.

Now supply the missing segment of this sentence.

> Then he seemed to come to some decision and suddenly reached out and _____ my blankets.

Responses are always verbs; they fit the syntax, and fit the semantics. Very often respondents produce snatched or snatched off which is the original deleted verb. Readers can in fact predict syntax and meaning without having complete visual data.

Miscue analysis of the reading process, (Goodman, Burke, 1972) operates on the principles suggested by transformational theory in that it views reading as a process which uses data from all the subsystems of language available to the reader. Differences between what we expect to hear and what we do hear when we listen to a reader read (what we see on the page and what the reader produces) are seen as potential insights into how readers are matching their language to the language printed on the page. Each difference, each miscue, is assessed on the basis of how it matches or mismatches the grapho-phonic, semantic,

and syntactic information contained in the print. The underlying assumption, as in transformational grammar, is that readers should be attempting to get at the deep structure of the printed sentence, should be getting at the meaning of the sentence. The assessment of miscues is an attempt to see if readers' oral responses represent a surface variation of a deep structure identical with the author's deep structure (or nearly so), or whether the oral response (miscue) indicates that readers have produced surface variations which must be traced to a different deep structure than the author intended or no deep structure at all--that is the readers produce nonsense.

An example of mismatch which a proficient reader might produce would be the production of

Living in Florida, the old man suns on the beach

as

The old man living in Florida suns on the beach

or reading

The vermillion sun sinking in the west delighted the sailors

as

The red sun sinking in the west delighted the sailors

In both cases, the proficient reader has produced a miscue, an oral response different from the text, yet in both cases the response derives from the same deep structure as the author's original sentence. In the first example, the reader clearly processed the syntactic data which specified that the sentence contained a relative clause, but produced the relative clause in a different, but syntactically acceptable position in the sentence. In the second example, the reader processed the semantic data, and produced an acceptable semantic synonym for the word vermillion.

Examples such as these indicate that the reader processes a significant portion, perhaps all, of the sentence he encounters before beginning the oral linear production for the benefit of the audience. More importantly for our immediate concerns, the reader organizes the production on the basis of analyzing the deep structure, and that analysis does not rely on the linear ordering of the text.

In these examples, I stated that the reader produced a surface structure different from the author's. Such a statement suggests that the reader extracted the meaning, determined the deep structure, then produced the phonology we hear, that is reconstructed the sentence from deep structural understanding of the sentence as given by the author. Hence we can postulate this model of the silent reading process which takes into account the non-linear nature of language we have been considering: Reader and text interact with the reader using syntactic, semantic, and graphemic cues in an ordering determined by the reader's current needs; the interaction produces a series of predictions of meaning for the text; the reader checks the text to confirm the predictions, that is to determine the accuracy of comprehension; if the check proves the comprehension, the reader proceeds. The essential points of the model and our discussion are

that the reader samples from the text, predicts meaning, confirms or denies the prediction from his or her knowledge of language and experience, resamples and repredicts, or forges on. Proficient readers use all available data prediction; nonproficient readers are limited to one or two systems. Miscues for proficient readers will reflect the readers' use of all systems, and most often will not significantly disrupt meaning. Miscues for nonproficient readers will be primarily concentrated in one system and will show disruption of meaning. We must expect such disruption when we force readers to concentrate on only one of these three subsystems of language and concurrently teaching them to make decisions on the basis of the linear presentation of the text rather than allowing them to hold decisions about meaning until they have received enough data to process for meaning.

The majority of our instructional methods for reading presume that we process language in a linear fashion. Phonics and whole word methods instruct children to process each unit, either letter or word, in a left to right, top to bottom sequential order. The underlying assumption is that meaning and syntax are additive; as we add each unit, we increase by small increments our understanding of the sentence. Each sentence in turn increases our understanding of the text, very like building a wall. Brick by brick we complete a row, and we must lay each brick immediately adjacent to the last one or we run the risk of creating an odd sized space, or weakening the wall. Completing one row allows us to begin another, and finally through the addition of each discrete brick, we create a wall. Current linguistic and psycholinguistic study suggests that building walls and reading print are not analogous tasks. To garner syntactic and semantic meaning from a sentence, we must, at a minimum, process larger chunks, as complete a syntactic or semantic chunk as we can manage, even from the beginning of learning. Furthermore, language is redundant so that we do not need to process every single bit of language that the writer or speaker presents to us. In other words, readers, like listeners, need to know how to extract maximally meaningful units and ignore the rest, unless some cue in the text says, "Go back, you missed a piece that is more important than you thought it was."

If a child reading the sentence "The bird flies through the air " can manage the oral production of "the bird" but stops at "flies," an approach which assumes the necessity of linear processing would either ask the child to "sound out" "flies" or would tell him the word so he could continue his linear processing. An approach which recognizes that language is non-linear would ask the child to skip over "flies" and process the remainder of the sentence, because the child can use the syntactic and semantic information of "through the air" to determine the meaning of "flies". We would be quite happy if the child read "The bird through the air flies" without stumbling, provided it were written that way on the page, as it might be in a poem. The point at issue is a rather simple one. A writer chooses one surface presentation from a range of possibilities, with emphasis on choose and possibilities. Readers also choose possible deep structures, and in making their choice, can, indeed must, process the linear visual data as non-linear language data; they must search through the visual presentation for syntactic, semantic and graphonic data that illuminates the deep structure. Succeeding information may be necessary to make prior information meaningful.

Furthermore, children should be encouraged to continue reading beyond the sentence even when they do not give an accurate oral version of the visual data

or do not say some portion of the sentence out loud. They may indeed have grasped the meaning, but cannot at the moment produce the precise word or synonym. They may be suffering a lapse similar to our common inability to remember a word or a name when we are talking, but know that we know the word, the "oh, yeah, his name starts with a J" syndrome. Children may not in fact know some words or what they mean, but by reading on they increase the language data available and thereby increase their chances of realizing they know the concepts or words, or in fact learning the words. Confident readers ignore the portions of the text they find of peripheral importance and ask questions of themselves or someone else when something they can't figure out occurs in the text.

We must keep in mind that physical limitations demand linear production of language, that we must produce successive sounds, because we have learned no other way to order language in oral space, that we must present successive letters and words on a page, because we cannot order them otherwise in visual space. We must also realize that we do not need to process oral and print language as it is presented linearly, in fact we can't if we are to process it efficiently.

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'Tis the good reader that makes the good book; in every book he finds passages which seem confidences or asides hidden from all else and unmistakably meant for his ear; the profit of books is according to the sensibility of the reader; the profoundest thought or passion sleeps as in a mine, until it is discovered by an equal mind and heart.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson
Success

TOWARD COMPREHENSIVE READING PROGRAMS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Gerald G. Duffy and Laura R. Roehler
Michigan State University

Secondary school reading programs are no longer just a dream. The concept of continuing reading instruction beyond the elementary school years has been accepted in principle by most educators and will soon become a reality in the schools. A few collaborative efforts have been initiated in an attempt to create quality secondary reading programs. Unfortunately, secondary reading theory seems to be a maze of competing claims and counter-claims. The points of debate include whether secondary school reading should focus on developmental reading, content area reading or literature; whether the approach taken should be "holistic" or "basic skills"; and whether instruction should be didactic, formal, and controlled, on the one hand, or heuristic, informal, and discovery-centered on the other. The debate creates divisiveness among those who should be uniting to create the secondary school reading programs of the future: the reading professors and the English professors, the reading associations and the English associations, the teachers of reading and the teachers of English.

Consequently, this paper has two goals. First, it includes a plea to end such divisiveness and to consciously collaborate in building a comprehensive model for secondary school reading. Such an effort will not be easy since the differences in philosophy and values are genuine. However, if these differences are expressed within the framework of collaboration, they can result in broad, rich secondary reading programs rather than narrow, parochial ones.

Second, the paper suggests components of a secondary reading program which, at best, could provide a common foundation for program development and, at the very least, could be the starting point for a dialogue. These components focus on the scope of the secondary school reading program, the nature of the developmental aspect of the program, and the nature of the instruction provided.

The Scope of the Secondary Reading Program

Discussion of the scope of the secondary school reading program focuses on two questions: 1) Should the program be limited to remedial students or be made an integral part of the instruction provided for all? 2) Should the program emphasize developmental reading, reading in the content areas, or literature programs? In both instances, the solution rests not in an "either-or" polarity but, rather, with a composite.

Remedial only or reading for all? There can be little quarrel regarding the need for reading instruction for those secondary school students who fall behind during the elementary school years. The reports about declining literacy

levels (Campbell, 1978; Wallach and Wallach, 1976), of declines in test scores (College Entrance Examination Board, 1977; National Assessment, 1976) and of general dissatisfaction with the reading achievement of our students (Cushenberry, 1977; Gallup, 1977) all argue for the need to increase reading competence, particularly among low achieving students.

Just as important, though less publicized, is the need for continued reading instruction for all secondary students. This is not a new concept; its need has been emphasized for years (Artley, 1967; Russell, 1963) and research conducted in secondary school has validated its importance (Berkey, 1967; Cushenberry, 1977; Criscuolo and Rossman, 1977). Most recently, a three year study conducted in Great Britain (Lunzer and Gardner, 1979) concluded:

> *Reading improvement can be effected by attention to reading and its allied skills; we have found no evidence that a similar improvement can be brought about by treating reading as a by-product of normal classroom practice.*

Consequently, a strong argument can be made that all students, both remedial and otherwise, need reading instruction in secondary school. A balanced reading program should be made available for both groups.

Developmental reading, content area reading or literature program? The second issue relates to the type of reading program to be provided for non-remedial secondary school students and focuses on whether emphasis should be placed on the process of reading itself, on reading as it is applied to the subject matter encountered in the various content areas, or on the reading of quality literature. Essentially, the argument revolves around the definition of "reading." Developmentalists associate it with learning to read and emphasize skills; content proponents associate it with interpreting print to learn the subject matter and emphasize the concept development associated with a particular content; literature proponents associate it with appreciation and emphasize the deepening and intensifying literary experience gained from the reading of good writing.

Again, an "either-or" position is not helpful. The research indicates that there are skills of reading which can be profitably taught at the secondary level (Davis, 1968; Stallings, 1979; Weaver, 1977), that there are content-specific patterns of processing associated with the content areas (Herber, 1979; Peters, 1979; Sanders, 1974) and that a love and appreciation for reading can be developed through programs which emphasize affective response to good literature (Lundsteen, 1972; Purves, 1975). Consequently, the solution lies with a composite model in which reading skills instruction is provided for those who need it, in which content teachers develop the unique conceptual and language patterns associated with text comprehension, and in which literature teachers use exemplary writing to develop the affective dimensions of reading and in which all secondary teachers collaborate in developing well-rounded readers.

In short, secondary schools need comprehensive reading programs which meet the needs of all students and which develop all aspects of reading. Progress does not lie with creating "stop-gap" programs limited to disabled readers; nor can it come about through emphasizing one aspect of reading to the exclusion of others. Instead, all students must be served and the result must be citizens who are literate in all senses of the word.

The Content of Developmental Reading

Comprehensive programs encompassing the developmental, content area and literature components of reading are essential. The least understood of these components, however, is developmental reading. What should be taught in a secondary school developmental reading program, and how can we insure that such instruction is comprehensive rather than narrow and isolated?

Developmental reading refers to an organized program of instruction in which the skills of reading are taught in a sequential and logical fashion. Hence, the skills of reading are the content of developmental programs.

However, skills themselves are a highly controversial issue in secondary reading. Some experts (Goodman, 1979; Smith, 1975) suggest that there are not--or ought not to be--any reading "skills" taught at all. For most others, the question does not seem to be whether or not there are skills of reading but, rather, whether they are the same skills as those traditionally associated with the "skills model" and whether they should be presented in isolation. The recent work of Anderson (1979) on scheme theory and of Pearson (1979) on text comprehension are examples of recent work which focuses on teaching students how to read better by learning "skills" within the context of the reading act.

Consequently, while there is relatively little argument that decoding skills are not the proper focus of the secondary school developmental reading program, there does seem to be a basis for teaching the specific components of vocabulary and comprehension. Specifically, this emphasis should reflect the communication function of language in which writers converse with readers in order to communicate meaning (Brown, 1975; Olson, 1977); should help readers "tune in" to the cognitive structures used by the author (Anderson, 1979); should aid readers in using the syntactic and semantic cues embedded in the text (Aulls, 1978; Athey, 1977); and should help them learn to predict meaning using these language cues, their background experience and an understanding of the matching which is necessary between the "schemata" used by the writer and that of the reader (Brown, Smiley and Lawton, 1977; Meyer, Brandt and Bluth, 1978).

Similarly, there is little disagreement regarding whether secondary students should learn how to study efficiently. The ability to use specific aids in books, to locate specialized reference material, to adjust rate to purpose and to organize study habits are all part of reading and must be developed if students are to be truly literate (Lunzer and Gardner, 1979). A similar argument can be made for the specialized skills associated with literature, such as interpreting literary devices and developing a sense for style, characterization and story grammar (Baker and Stein, 1978; Guthrie, 1977; Lundsteen, 1972).

Just as crucial as the issue skills teaching is that of the context for instruction. Few responsible educators argue that skills should be taught in isolation for their own sake. Reading is a meaning-getting process and operates within the total language arts. Consequently, skills of vocabulary, comprehension, study and literary understandings should be presented within the context of both meaningful connected text and the other language modes (NCRE, 1973). If a context skill is needed, it should be taught as both a way of interpreting meaning in print and as a way of embedding meaning when speaking and writing (Olson, 1972);

if a comprehension skill is needed, it should be presented within a framework in which relevant reflective thinking is stimulated (Lunzer and Gardner, 1979); a study skill should be taught in conjunction with its immediate and functional use (Hieronymus, Lundquist and Hoover, 1978); and skills associated with literary understandings should be presented within the context of language activities which call for the use of such learning in both reading and writing situations (Donelson, 1977).

Hence, like the secondary reading program as a whole, the developmental aspect should be comprehensive. It should focus on comprehension, study skills, and literary understandings and be presented within meaningful contexts in which students apply skills both in interpreting connected text and in the other language arts modes. Such an emphasis insures that secondary students possess the technique to cope with ever more complex language demands and is one vital aspect of a good secondary reading program.

The Nature of Instruction

Of all the controversies surrounding secondary school reading, none is more clearly stated than that associated with instruction. The question here is, quite simply, "Do we provide instruction in reading or do we allow it to develop naturally from the student's intuitive language capacity?"

Frank Smith (1973) states the case for not providing specific instruction:

> *Learning to read is a complex and delicate task in which almost all the rules, all the cues, and all the feedback can be obtained only through the process of reading itself. Children learn to read by reading.*

Representing the researchers of teaching are, among others, Brophy (1979), Gage (1978) and Rosenshine (1979), all of whom argue that research linking teaching behavior to student learning is making significant progress in creating a scientific base for teaching. Rosenshine (1979) summarizes their position by stating, "The message is clear: what is not taught and attended to in academic areas is not learned."

Even on this seemingly polarized issue, however, there is room for a compromise which could serve as a foundation for building comprehensive secondary school reading programs. The key is found in the direct instruction research which has been conducted at the secondary level. While the work of Stallings, Needels and Stayrook (1979) and others (Brophy, 1979) supports the use of direct instruction techniques in teaching reading skills at the secondary level, Brophy (1979) points out that such practices are not effective when applied to those non-skill based language learnings taught at the secondary level. Rosenshine (1979) supports this when he states that a more open and discovery-centered approach "...seems more suitable for achieving intuitive and creative goals."

Consequently, one can visualize a secondary school reading program involving a variety of instructional types. First, the techniques of direct instruction could be used to teach many aspects of developmental reading, with teachers providing specific guided assistance both in helping students under-

stand the skill and in helping them transfer it to use in connected text. Simultaneously, indirect techniques could be used to develop appreciation and creative aspects of reading. Finally, within the same program, there could be a strong emphasis on the reading of teacher-prescribed and self-selected materials which reflect both "survival" reading and quality literature, with the principles of sustained silent reading being utilized to provide the student with what Smith (1975) describes as the opportunity to:

> *...test his hypotheses about the nature of the reading process, establish distinctive feature sets for words, learn to identify... meanings with a minimum of visual information and discover how not to overload the brain's information-processing capacity and to avoid bottlenecks of memory.*

Using such a composite approach within an integrated language arts model is particularly promising for secondary school reading. Not only would the intuitive aspects of language learning be enhanced by employing more than one language mode in instruction but, as noted by the National Council for Research in English (1973), the language skills themselves would be learned and applied in meaningful and purposeful ways throughout the total curriculum.

Hence, even the issue of instruction in secondary school reading can be viewed comprehensively. Rather than creating programs in which instruction is exclusively of one kind or another, we can create programs in which each is appropriately applied to achieve particular goals. Such a comprehensive approach to instruction is likely to be more helpful to more students than insisting that all instruction for all reading and language purposes reflect a single position.

Current circumstances have placed us at a crossroads in secondary reading instruction. The response teachers make in the immediate future to the needs for reading programs at the middle and high school level will have a dramatic effect on quality for years to come.

It is our hope that our response can be a collaborative one. No one has all the answers in reading, generally, or in secondary reading, particularly. However, by creatively molding together the various research and philosophical positions and by consciously minimizing divisiveness, we can move toward comprehensive, secondary school reading programs which will have a positive impact on the literacy of young people.

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The reading of all good books is indeed like a conversation with the noblest men of past centuries ....

--Rene Descartes
Discourse on Method

NOTHING IMPROVES READING LIKE READING; BUT YOU'VE GOT TO GET THEM TO DO IT FIRST

Martha Fuce
Plainwell High School

Four kinds of reading classes have been built into Plainwell High School's phased-elective language arts curriculum for its 878 students. Nearly every high school student elects to take at least one of these classes for one semester during his four years. Remedial Reading is designed for students who are two or more grade levels behind in their reading skills; Developmental Reading is for the average or above average reader who wants to improve his or her skills in vocabulary, comprehension, directed reading and efficiency. Independent Reading is offered to those students who want time to read fiction and non fiction and progress up the reading ladder, and Seminar in Reading is provided for those accelerated readers who want in-depth discussions and structured writing assignments on such works as Brave New World, 1984, Stranger in a Strange Land, Grapes of Wrath, Huck Finn, Catcher in the Rye, A Separate Peace, All Quiet on the Western Front, The Stranger, and Future Shock.

Even though the high school students are taking reading classes (313 have elected a reading class during 1979-1980), they often seem to have a built-in aversion to reading, or at least to the word "reading" itself, particularly in the skills classes. Reading is equated with dullness. It's a boring, passive activity.

After ten years in the high school reading classroom and coping with the "I hate to read" syndrome, I have learned to be a very sneaky teacher. "I hate to read" generally means "I can't read very well," or it means, "I hate to have to sit still and be quiet when I'd rather do something active." Yet, students need to practice reading if they're ever going to improve. Because I want every remedial and developmental reader to become a more efficient reader, and because I want them both to recognize that reading can be a pleasurable experience, I have injected all kinds of projects into these skill classes to keep students "reading away" when sometimes they aren't even aware they're "reading." My success as a reading teacher depends on whether or not I can change negative attitudes toward this discipline.

•Remedial readers build model cars when we're working on following directions. Both boys and girls bring in models they wish to build. This is an old hat experience for most boys who have built them before, but a brand new experience for the girls. The only requirement is that they must follow the directions carefully--both the pictures and the explanations. Some interesting things happen. On occasion boys become egotistical and do it their way only to end up

with parts left over. The girls generally follow the directions because they have to, but they become terribly frustrated and have to ask the boys for help--good for the boys' self concepts. The boys, in turn, are impressed with how well the girls' cars turn out--good for the girls' self concepts. Both groups mix well during this project. They help each other; they're careful with each others' property; they socialize in a compatible way; and they soon learn that the best cars are the results of careful step-by-step assembling. The cars are judged for perfection by our auto mechanics teacher who awards a blue ribbon to the winner, a red ribbon to second place, and a white ribbon to third. Someday these students will have to assemble toys for their own children and put together all kinds of house accessories where they will have to follow directions explicitly. All of us know only too well the frustrations of "curtain rod" fiascos when we didn't bother to follow the directions.

•Reading plays aloud becomes a favorite student activity by the end of the semester. Scope magazine provides much of our material because it is timely and because it is written on most students' independent reading. The greatest fear that the high school student has of reading aloud is being laughed at when he mispronounces a word. Once students feel comfortable with the words, they beg for parts. Time permitting we produce a play on stage--a wonderful experience for these students who have so often been overlooked, but who may have outstanding acting talents.

•Machines do motivate. The high school student likes the controlled reader, Craig reader, tachistoscope, and listening post if these machines don't become an everyday affair. They provide a "hands on" opportunity to make the mechanics of reading more palatable. Lessons must be carefully prescribed for the individuals so they know exactly what they are to do, why they are doing it, how much time it should take them to do it, and what percent of efficiency they should strive to achieve. By completing a lesson and recording progress, the reluctant reader gains confidence.

•I also involve my students in listening, reading, and creating. The students listen to and read along with good stories on tapes. This semester we're using The Hobbit and Lord of the Rings. Students have created wall displays and have written their own "dungeons and dragons" adventure. I never cease to be amazed at the number of "artists in residence" I have every semester.

Developmental readers have a scavenger hunt, take a trip to Florida, complete fifteen speed reading lessons, play "Pinnacle" and "Propaganda," write language-experience books, and learn how parents can instill good reading habits in their children.

•Our scavenger hunts take place in the reference area of the library and are part of the directed reading unit. Most students can handle the card catalogs with ease, but they are at a loss for good information when they are faced with a research project. Our librarian lectures on the advantages of a research strategy and on the various types of reference books that can be used. Students are asked to take good notes (reinforcement of the note taking unit) and use them to locate bits of information. Each student is given his or her own scavenger hunt--twenty questions to answer. Part of the search includes materials found on microfilm, microfiche, and the computer. For a follow-up project the students are

asked to prepare a short bibliography using appropriate sources for a chosen topic, although they are not asked to write the whole research paper.

•Students get to go to Florida--vicariously. This is a delightful skimming and scanning exercise that generates a pleasurable reading trip. During each Christmas vacation I spend two weeks in Florida, and I pick up newspapers while traveling south and during my stay there. On our first day back to school in January, I ask, "Who wants to go to Louisville? to Nashville? to Chattanooga? to Atlanta? to Jacksonville? to Orlando? to Miami? to Tampa? Students choose a city and get a skimming drill.

1. Find a job suitable to your skills.
2. Buy the most expensive car.
3. What's your horoscope?
4. Go to a movie.
5. On what page is the crossword puzzle?
6. What's the lead sports story?
7. Is the editor pro or con in this issue?
8. How do you know?
9. With what issue does one "Letter to the Editor" concern itself?
10. Would you like to live in your city? Why/why not?

•Often developmental readers lack efficiency skills. They read every kind of material the very same way--social studies, literature, novels, math, science, and the newspaper all get the same treatment without pre-established purpose. The fifteen timed lessons in Ward Cramer's, Speed Reading for Better Grades helps students improve their speed and accuracy. There is something about taking a stop watch out of a desk drawer that mesmerizes a whole classroom. Students become very serious when they are competing against time and have to remember what they have read.

•Games help reinforce skills if they, too, are used sparingly. Two of my favorites are "Pinnacle" and "Propaganda." Color-coded dice with roots, prefixes, and suffixes printed on each side of the cubes make up the contents of the "Pinnacle" game. Each has a point value. Students throw the dice and try to build words using as many combinations of roots and affixes as possible for the highest number of points.

•Critical reading is critical. There's no doubt that Americans are molded by the media. Students should recognize some of the persuasive techniques Madison Avenue and politicians use on us. Whiffenproof's "Propaganda" game opens minds to all kinds of loaded language.

•Creating language-experience books gives the high school student an insight into one method of teaching reading, while it also gives him something practical to use. We invite an elementary classroom to come to the high school. Each of the elementary students picks a high school student to be his or her book-writing buddy. The elementary student tells the high school student a story, (Christmas time is a good time to do these). The high school student writes it down and later types it in primary print. The story is fitted to the pages in the book. Students meet again and this time they make dry mount book covers together. The high school student assembles the book and does half the illus-

trations and returns the book to the buddy who completes the pictures. We then all meet at the elementary school to read and share books. When we have refreshments, the juice is served in Guiness "record" cups so we can read them too.

•Besides learning how to make children's books, which is a worthwhile rainy day activity when babysitting, the high schoolers are told what parents can do to instill good reading habits in their children. They are shown homemade and commercial games that they can play together to strengthen reading readiness skills. They are told to listen to their children, to read to them, to provide them with all kinds of experiences, to take care of them physically, and above all, to love them and treat them always with respect. I hope some of this will be remembered when these young people become parents.

•Best days of all are Fridays when we curl up in old couches and chairs and read a good book. My greatest challenge is helping each student find a book that will keep his or her interest. It is not all uncommon for students to tell me that this is the first time they have read a book all the way through. Semester-end posttesting tells me whether there have been improvements in basic skills, but if by the end of the semester I have overheard students recommending "a really good book" to their friends, or if someone has asked me to "find another one just like this one" then I can count a measure of success. After all, nothing improves reading like reading.

The best books are those whose readers think they could have written them.

--Blaise Pascal
Geometrical Demonstration

THE MULTIDIMENSIONAL LITERATURE PROGRAM

Stephen Judy
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There are as many answers to the question "Why can't Johnny and Jane read?" as there are critics of education, which means that there are so many answers that one cannot look for a simple solution. Indeed, Peter Sanders of Wayne State University has cast the question itself into doubt by stating:

> *The number of students who cannot read is small. The number of students who will not read, who have been taught again and again to think of themselves as inadequate, slow, and disabled--and who therefore behave as if they are--is considerable.* [/ *"Reading and the English Teacher," The English Journal (September 1974) 59.* /]

Like Sanders, I am convinced that large numbers of Johnnies and Janes do read and can read much better than critics are willing to recognize. Further, I am both intrigued and disturbed by the research of Kathleen Lampert and Edna Saunders which suggests that the school population includes a great many "skilled non-readers," students whose reading skills are adequate according to conventional tests but who reveal on questionnaires that they simply don't bother to read outside of school. [/ "Readers and Non-Readers: What's the Difference? The English Journal (September 1976), 34-38. /] Of course the schools have their share of problem readers, and, if one accepts test scores at face value, many children read below their designated grade level. At the same time, personal observation and common sense show that young people can read: They read pop magazines and record album covers; they buy and read science fiction; they borrow and read adolescent novels.

The problem, as I see it, is twofold. First, students don't read enough in school, and second, they don't transfer very much from the reading they do in school to their reading outside. In this essay I want to concentrate on the former problem by asking, "How can we get young people to do more reading in school?" If teachers can discover answers to that question, the second concern--reading outside of school--may well take care of itself.

More specifically, I want to focus on a single weakness that I see plaguing reading programs in the schools: their one-dimensional nature. For whether they consider themselves teachers of literature or reading, teachers have a tendency to create programs with a monistic view of the reader and his or her needs. Thus it is fair to say that in a great many literature courses, the reader is narrowly perceived as someone in need of enculturation and spiritual/literary enrichment. The teacher chooses reading material from among the relatively few

works held to be "great" by scholars. In contrast, the reader in a remedial program is perceived as deficient in skills, in need of practice and drill, not literary enlightment. The remedial teacher then stresses skills to the exclusion of some highly readable good literature.

In the remainder of this essay I will describe three "variables" in the literature program: the mode of presentation by a teacher, the form of response made by the students, and the teacher's role in fostering the interaction between young people and books. My thesis is a simple one: I believe that the teacher should introduce a range of teaching techniques into the classroom, seeking to maximize the number of ways in which students encounter and react to written materials. I believe that if students experience the full "play" of print, and if they are provided opportunities to respond in a variety of ways, they will move more and more toward not only having reading skills, but being skilled users of reading as well. (The three variables are summarized below.)

THREE VARIABLES IN THE LITERATURE PROGRAM

Mode of Presentation

Presentation of literary material plus discussion*
Literature as group experience*
Individual child/individual book*
Small group reading
Reading for problem-solving
Reading for pleasure

Form of Response

Interpretation and analysis
Examinations
Formal criticism
Subjective response
Informal criticism
Creative writing
Drama, media, art, music, etc.

Teacher Role

Lecturer
Discussion leader
Reading resource
Record keeper
Project manager
Confidant/e

*From D. W. Harding, "Response to Literature," in Response to Literature, James R. Squire, ed. (National Council of Teachers of English, 1968).

Mode of Presentation

In Response to Literature (NCTE, 1968), D. W. Harding identified three principal ways in which books are given or assigned to young people. The first of these is the discussion of literary material, and until very recently, it has been the dominant mode of presentation in both schools and colleges. "Discussion" here is a bit of a euphemism, for in a majority of classrooms, the talk is hardly open and free. Rather, it centers on the students' discovering answers to questions raised by the teacher. But the Dartmouth Seminar of 1966 helped teachers see how that the response a student makes to literature is at least as important as the set meaning which critics find in the text. In response-centered classrooms, young people find themselves free to present their intuitive, subjective reactions before proceeding to analyze the language and form of the text itself.

Even so, whether lecturer or discussion leader, the teacher need not dominate the literature program. Harding suggests that another important mode of presentation is literature as group experience. He observes that there are many good books which ought simply to be shared by readers--not discussed, analyzed, or critized. He points out that most people's first experiences with books--being read to by a parent or grandparent--are usually of this kind, and he argues that the sharing of books ought to be extended up in the schools as well. Any Michigan resident within broadcast range of Michigan State University's WKAR knows the spellbinding effect that the "Radio Reader" has on adults. All of us enjoy a good story, and storytelling has deep roots in our culture. I believe teachers should draw on the intrinsic appeal of literature and use it as a shared classroom experience frequently.

Moving even further from the teacher-centered classroom is the mode of presentation Harding calls individual child and the individual book. This approach is, of course, individualized reading, a well-known and increasingly popular mode of presentation in American schools. A good individualized reading program ought to be very near the center of the English program, with young people provided a great deal of time for reading in school. When students are engaged in private reading, teachers often find time for individual conferences and discussions. In the process of individualizing reading, teachers find ways to individualize writing assignments as well. The entire curriculum starts to open up, simply because the teacher gets students reading on their own rather than following teacher-centered presentations.

Another technique helpful in making students independent readers is the small group approach, where clusters of students, usually three to five, read a single work in common. This is a good way to present longer books--novels and non-fiction--that are not suitable for analysis by an entire class. In the small group approach, the teacher often prepares a series of general or specific questions designed to trigger discussion, then lets the students seek answers to those questions and others which the group itself develops. Usually the small group will report back to the full class, so that every student receives at least indirect contact with a variety of titles.

Reading for problem-solving is perhaps less a "mode" of presentation than an attitude toward students and their reading. Too often, I believe, teachers assign books for solely literary reasons: "Read this book. You'll learn something about plot, theme, form, character, the author, style, or symbolism."

But in the real world one seldom reads simply to learn more about literature and its structure (unless he or she is a university scholar). People read to learn, to find new information, to seek answers to questions. I lump all those self-selected purposes for reading together under the term "problem solving."

It is no easy task to help students find purpose in reading, but I would like to suggest two areas where teachers can take important steps. First, teachers should bring interdisciplinary materials into the classroom, providing books and magazines that cover the alphabetical range of human experience from aardvarks to zygospores. No topic of interest to any student should be excluded simply because it is apparently covered in another school subject. Second, I think teachers should develop courses and units which have a problem-solving, community-oriented dimension, so that students feel that their reading touches on concerns outside of school.

But lest even problem-solving, purposeful reading become a one-dimensional approach to the curriculum, it is important to recall that first and foremost, reading must be an enjoyable activity: People read for pleasure. In an affirmation of the joys of reading, "Literature IS!" G. Robert Carlsen notes that human beings have enjoyed reading just as long as they have been able to write:

> *We are literature-creating and literature-consuming animals. In the long course of human history, literature seems to transcend military victories, political institutions, and economic accomplishments.* / *The English Journal (February 1974), 24* /

Whatever the dimensions of the reading or literature program, I think teachers should keep in mind the natural interests Johnny and Jane bring to the English classroom. They may at times seem bored and unmotivated, and they may score abominably on standardized reading tests; but they have an intrinsic interest in reading and literature that comes from being human, and they have the potential, not only to read, but to enjoy reading.

Form of Response

Just as the pattern of interaction between young people and books can be varied, the ways in which students are allowed to respond or react to their reading need to be varied as well. In the traditional literature program, responses tend to be limited to analysis and interpretation. In addition, these responses are often channeled into the form of the multiple-choice or essay test, which serve little purpose other than to determine whether or not the students have actually read the work in question. Alternatively, the questions raised by the teacher may be an attempt to engage the students in formal criticism of the sort that the teacher may not have fully mastered until he or she was in college.

A valuable alternative for teachers is subjective response to reading, discussed most eloquently at the theoretical level by Louise Rosenblatt / Literature as Exploration. (Noble and Noble, 1968) / and in practice by Alan Purves and others / How Porcupines Make Love (Ginn, Xerox, 1972) / Rosenblatt calls literature a "performing art," explaining that texts do not simply "perform" for a reader; the reader also "performs" on the text, getting better and better at making a response to what he or she reads. Purves points out that the act of reading moves two ways, from the text to the reader and from the reader to the

text. The work of Purves and Rosenblatt meshes with that of Frank Smith, who, in Understanding Reading (Holt, Rinehart, Winston, 1974), has destroyed many of the conventional myths about reading and comprehension by outlining the complex ways in which a reader comes to understand--or more accurately to interpret or create meaning from--a text.

Encouraging subjective response is emphatically not a matter of letting students react any old way or of saying that a poem or play or story can mean anything a reader wants it to mean. Nor does it involve the sort of critical relativism that refuses to make value judgments about works of art or holds that any person's judgment is just as good as anybody else's. In practice, teaching subjective response is very difficult, for it requires that the teacher temporarily abandon his or her own set interpretation and to seek ways of helping students develop their own. The response-centered teacher is constantly probing, encouraging, and pushing to get students to make their reactions complex and articulate.

Coupled with subjective response is what I call informal criticism, carrying the student beyond simply responding to a book and encouraging him or her to discuss why it had the effect that it did. Through informal criticism the teacher has the students examine texts closely, looking at language, form, and structure, not for the purpose of teaching critical terminology, but for helping them understand their reactions to the text.

To illustrate those two stages more concretely, I can suggest two levels of questions the teacher can use to direct discussion of a piece of literature:

> *Subjective Response. How did you feel at the end of the story? What moved you in this poem? What did you think of the hero? Who did you think was the heroine? Did you like the ending?*
>
> *Informal Criticism. Why do you suppose the author ended it as he/she did? What were the words or phrases in the poem that had strong impact on you? Why do you suppose the writer chose to use her as the heroine?*

The subjective method must involve an interplay between response, reaction, and interpretation.

Nor is informal criticism completely incompatible with more formal kinds of analysis. In the previous paragraph I used two quasi-literary terms--"hero" and "heroine"--to clarify my presentation. There is no reason why such terms cannot be introduced as they prove useful in subjective criticism; but they should emphatically not be "taught" merely to make young people write like critics. There is no reason to believe that mastery of critical terminology makes a person a good or successful reader.

In this examination of criticism I may have created the impression that classroom discussion is the only way in which response can be taught. But those interested in subjective response have shown that it can take place in many forms and modes. Creative writing provides a natural outlet for reactions to what one reads; for example, a student can:

--read a series of newspaper articles on inner city problems and respond by writing a short story set in the city.

--read a collection of poems by a favorite author and write some of her own, not just imitations, but original works that reflect her reaction and response.

--read several historical novels and write a one-act play based on historical materials.

Other nonwritten modes of response should not be ignored. Drama--especially creative dramatics--provides an invaluable way for students to articulate a response. Creating in media--film, videotape, slide tape, sound tape--provides another. Many teachers have encouraged art and music as modes of response to reading. Any mode of communication can be employed as a way of helping students articulate their engagement with print.

Teacher Role

Obviously changing the ways in which reading materials are presented to students brings about new roles for the teacher. In the English classroom, the teacher has traditionally served as a lecturer, as a discussion leader, or as a critic who sets the standards for the course. While at times those functions are valid, the multidimensional approach to literature suggests many others.

For example, the teacher should serve as a reading resource to young people, not just prescribing single texts, but choosing among the thousands and thousands of books, magazines, monographs, and articles that are available. There is also plenty of help available for the teacher who serves as reading resource: NCTE publishes a number of good bibliographies of readable books including Books for You, Your Reading, High Interest/Easy Reading Books, and Reading Ladders for Human Relations in addition to some fine multi-ethnic and multi-cultural materials. The English Journal and Language Arts regularly publish book review columns and bibliographies. The Children's Book Council issues reading lists at regular intervals, including bibliographies of outstanding trade books in science, social studies, and history. But the most important resources are close to home, and it is a must that the teacher who wants to develop an individualized, response-centered program work closely with school, district, and public librarians to locate materials. Finally, as Hooked on Books has so successfully shown, paperback book and magazine distributors and the publishers of local newspapers can be enormously helpful. Even in these days of tightened budgets, there is no real reason why a teacher cannot offer a rich range of materials to his or her students.

But with those materials come other new responsibilities, for as an individualized reading program engages more and more students, teachers find themselves increasingly serving as record keepers. Some teachers, threatened by the thought of keeping track of the reading patterns of all their students, give up on individualized reading, preferring to stick to the single text. But the recordkeeping need not become burdensome. Teachers I have worked with have developed a variety of systems: Some issue file folders and ask the students themselves to make notes on the books they have read; others use an index card system; one devotes an entire bulletin board to recording students' progress on graphs.

Akin to the recordkeeping problem is that of serving as project manager. A few teachers seem to feel that "project managing" is a less worthy or less dignified occupation than lecturing about literature and criticism, but I personally find it an enjoyable, relaxed mode of teaching myself and a sign of true engagement with reading on the part of students. Students can take responsibility for supplying the teacher with regular reports on what they are doing, and the teacher can structure such reporting through the establishment of appropriate due dates or asking interim progress reports.

The last on my list of new teacher roles is that of confidant/e. Although many of the reactions that students make to their reading can be public, a book, as Elaine Konigsburg says, "is a private thing." If a reading program is successful, students will often be deeply moved by what they read, and they will find reflections of their own problems in books. At that point a public response may not be appropriate. James Britton has noted that at times children will address their writing to the teacher serving in the role of "trusted adult." Often students need the teacher of literature to serve in the same role--that of confidant/e. This function is not always a comfortable one for teachers, for they learn about problems and worries that sometimes seem as if they are more appropriate for the school counselor than the English teacher. But I believe that teachers should welcome that role, for it suggests that the reading program has gone well beyond the decoding phase, that what students read is actually affecting their lives.

Beginning the Multi-dimensional Literature Program

Given both the traditions and conditions of schooling in this country, it would be naive of me to recommend that teachers plunge directly into a fully dimensional reading program. But I believe that teachers can and should take systematic steps, as slowly or rapidly as they feel comfortable, to increase the number of variables in their literature classes. For Teacher A this might be as simple as introducing a "free reading Friday" in an English class. For Teacher B it might mean supplementing exercises in the reading laboratory with some oral shared reading sessions. Each teacher, obviously, must proceed at his or her own pace.

To conclude this essay, I want to suggest twenty-two projects, not necessarily in order of priority or importance, which a teacher can undertake, one or two at a time (but certainly not all at once) to increase the dimensionality of his or her program.

1. Search for sources of new and used paperbacks to begin (or extend) a classroom library.

2. Find subject matter books--history, science, mathematics--in the school library that you think might interest students and advertise them as good reading for English.

3. Have lunch with your school librarian or media center director to discuss ways of getting more reading material into your classroom.

4. Talk to a paperback distributor about setting up a free or low-cost "hooked on books" program in your school. Or encourage him or her to sponsor a book fair at your school.

5. Hold a used paperback drive in your school area or community. Collect used magazines as well.

6. Get copies of local newspapers supplied to your classroom on a regular basis.

7. Instead of assigning a single novel to an entire class, offer students a choice of four or five novels on a common theme.

8. Ignore the discussion questions in the literature anthology and start writing your own.

9. Invite students to create discussion questions for readings rather than answering yours.

10. Burn all your dittoed comprehension questions, pop quizzes, and multiple choice tests on reading.

11. Create a reading time in which you read aloud to your students.

12. Locate recordings of books your students are reading and play them for the class.

13. Divide students into small groups for discussion of books they have read.

14. Encourage students to keep a journal responding to their reading.

15. Do away with formal book reports.

16. Help students find books that talk about issues, problems, and concerns they see as important.

17. Tell students about your own personal responses to the books you read.

18. Encourage students to explore how and why books have effects on them, not in the formal language of criticism, but in the students' own words.

19. Encourage students to understand how other people's responses to books differ from their own, and why.

20. Allow students to explore their responses to reading through creative drama.

21. Have students prepare individual or group anthologies or booklists of their favorite reading.

22. Treat student writing as literature. That is, duplicate student writing and discuss its contents with the same respect that you would an established suthor's work.

TALK IS CHEAP

Mary Freydl
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Trying to make literature study interesting and meaningful to students is not a new concern for teachers; nor is the use of discussion techniques to explore literature. However, it is also a common experience to find that students deem "school reading" boring and that only those motivated to strive for grades are eager to participate in discussions. Despite the new attractive literature texts designed to "turn on" students, many of us have a vague feeling of discontent that we are not reaching young readers.

While I was sitting in a Glasser Training Course session I considered that it isn't the selections that are boring, but what teachers do with them. I came to realize that we all have the basic teaching tools necessary to make the exploration of literature successful with today's youth, and it would require little modification of the standard method of operation to bring better techniques to bear on a literature class. But these key modifications can make all the difference in the way students respond. Best of all, in these financially hard-pressed times, teachers can implement the plan I have in mind without additional funding. (They may want to purchase a copy of Dr. Glasser's paperback book, Schools Without Failure, Harper & Row, 1969, or one of his other statements of his philosophy of education, but it isn't necessary to the success of this plan.)

I believe that teachers must re-orient their approach to reading and literature and put the student in the picture first. Too many of us think primarily about the piece of literature itself, and we try to determine how we can convey its meaning to the students. I suggest that we think about the students first and try to bring the student into the literature.

The first step is to choose pieces of literature with which our students can personally identify. This may vary some according to geographical locations and the student population, but there are some general areas of interest that most young people share. Some texts are divided into thematic categories such as "Search for Self," "Accepting Responsibilities," and "Understanding Each Other," which are ready-made for the plan I will offer. However, even if you have a genre or chronological text, you can sift through the various sections to find literature that is either peopled by young characters, shows an interaction between youth and the adult world, or addresses itself to human problems or values that young people can reasonably have experienced in their lives.

Teachers must help students see the connection. For example, problems remote to students' personal experiences, such as the plight of a ghetto child to a

comfortably provided suburban youngster, must be seen in terms of the longings, needs, and losses all humans experience. The suburban child also has longings and needs. They may not be the same as those of the ghetto child, but the pain of that longing can be just as acute. Stories and poems with themes focusing on alienation, acceptance, and self-doubt work equally well, regardless of geographic setting, because the problems of adolescence and discovering one's identity are more common to an age than a location.

Once the material has been read, the class discussion of it should be based on the procedures taught by Glasser. I shall briefly outline how I have adapted those procedures.

Discussions should never occur with students seated in traditional rows and the teacher at the front of the room. Few junior or senior high school classrooms have seats anchored to the floor, so desks or chairs should be drawn into a tight circle, bringing the students and teacher into close proximity. A new course should open with get acquainted exercises that familiarize students with each other's names and major interests. During this time of freely sharing information about themselves, students should develop basic ground rules of courtesy for the discussions that will follow. Teachers will find that students truly enjoy these discussions and eagerly pull into the circles.

The appropriate tone for the discussions is one of sharing and inquiry. It is important that the teacher avoid a dominating role. He or she should introduce discussion topics clearly and quietly, encouraging students to volunteer experiences, feelings, opinions and observations. No offering can be considered a wrong answer, so the approach to literature in which the teacher comes armed with a list of questions about the content and meaning of the piece of literature will have to be discarded. It is fear of error in response to such questions that locks many students in silence.

Rather than the traditional set of questions and answers, the teacher should carefully design a series of discussion questions related to an event, issue, or character in that day's reading. The questions should focus on the students' reactions to the literature, rather than on a repetition of what happened in that reading. (I will offer samples later in this article.)

In response to these questions, the teacher will hear the sharing of experiences along with comparisons between students' real life experiences and the events or characters in the literature.

While there are no wrong answers, it is fair to keep students on the questions with courteous reminders. The teacher should also refuse to permit any rude or derogatory remarks. Unnecessary and unseemly comments seldom occur when students know open, honest sharing is encouraged since there is nothing to rebel against.

When students' offerings dwindle on one question, offer another one in a logical progression of exploration. I suggest at least four questions for a sharing circle on a short story or a single day's reading assignment in a novel. Of course, this means concentrating on major thoughts and issues and not on minute detail.

After the process of sharing personal experiences and observations, the teacher can lead students in exploring any important literary aspects of the reading. Interestingly, given the freedom to express themselves, students will often discuss such matters themselves. If the traditional literary terms are gradually introduced and freely used in discussions, they will become part of the students' vocabularies without teacher-delivered lectures.

To sublimate the teacher role in favor of more student involvement ask a student to summarize the class findings at the end of the hour. This summary can, on occasion, reveal some weakness in the exploration and may lead the students to want to explore further. Such self-criticism is much more valuable than teacher criticism.

Once students become familiar with this sharing/discussion mode, you may want to involve them even further by allowing them to take turns designing and offering the discussion topics. You may find that the total group sharing through this process is so rewarding that you will wonder why you spent so many class hours analyzing with two or three bright students while the rest of the class sat in bored silence.

The following are samples of short story selections with which I started my teaching year, paired with some suggestions for discussion questions.

FOUR DISCUSSION EXAMPLES

1. "The Stone Boy" by Gina Berriault tells of a young boy who is condemned because, numb with shock, he fails to exhibit remorse for the accidental shooting of his brother.

   A. Have you ever had a severe emotional shock? What was it?

   B. How did you react? Did you show your feelings outwardly or did you conceal them?

   C. How did other people respond to your emotional reaction?

   D. Can you make any suggestions for handling such a situation better in the future because of your experience?

2. "The Day of the Last Rock Fight" by Joseph Whitehill explores the unwritten code of silence when a young boy witnesses a murder at school, one committed by his best friend.

   A. Which is stronger, the unwritten code or established law? Why?

   B. Should we always protect our friends? Is it ever destructive to them and to us to do so?

   C. What is loyalty? What demands does it make on us? Is it the ultimate value?

D. How do we decide when it is appropriate to inform authorities and when it is proper to keep silent? How do we determine the consequences of such a decision?

3. "The Sunday Zeppelin" by William Saroyan tells the tale of two young boys who gullibly respond to a mail-order ad and learn first hand about real versus fantastic expectations.

A. Have you ever had a disappointment after long dreams of expectation? What was it?

B. How did you handle your disillusionment?

C. How did it affect your thought patterns and behavior afterward?

D. Should parents spare us such experiences? Why or why not? Would your parents let you learn for yourself, or try to tell you what to expect?

4. "The Fan Club" by Rona Maynard describes a young girl who sacrifices her values to avoid ridicule by a school clique.

A. Have you ever been the object of ridicule? How did it feel?

B. Have you ever engaged in ridicule? How did it feel? Why did you do it?

C. Would you ever sacrifice your values to gain acceptance with a clique or to protect yourself from their scorn?

D. When is it OK to go along with the crowd and when is it important to function according to your own values?

Such topics can be designed for any piece of literature, but beginning the course with some topics related to young people's experiences sets the mode for the discussions to follow.

If you care to follow up the oral discussions with writing assignments, it is important to maintain the focus on the student. For instance, rather than asking the student to explain why John chose to leave his sister on the railroad station platform, ask if the student would have done so and why or why not. When it comes time to test on the literature, keep the focus on the student by writing test questions that make them think about their own lives and experiences.

Using Glasser's discussion techniques to explore literature moves the central focus from an assessment of the literature itself to the student's response to the stimulation provided by that piece of literature. Such change in focus can overcome students' resistance and objections to classroom discussions that they formerly viewed as dryly academic and remote from real life experience. Further this approach can help students flesh out literary characters and see them as fully dimensional human beings. Most important, it can help students achieve personal growth and self-awareness through their reading.

STATIONING AS A READING MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUE

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One of the most successful methods I've found for individualizing and working more effectively with students' reading is stationing. The first step is to divide up a class into four groups (or five, if you have enough room or cooperation with the library or resource centers). This is the best number of groups to manage within a class period of forty-five to sixty minutes. Then, select four or five specific reading assignments you would like the students to accomplish for the week. Each group moves to a different area or station each day, providing variety and interest both through grouping and mobility. You may collect each day's assignments as they are completed or all of the assignments at the end of the week. I like to collect assignments daily since it is easier to keep track of each student's progress and record points (or grades).

Keep the assignments as streamlined as possible. Two out of four assignments should require students to work independently of the teacher, and two might require the teacher's direct attention. Stationing makes paper grading a bit more simplified, too, because you will only have five to seven papers (one group size) to grade of each assignment, breaking the monotony of doing a whole set of the same thing.

Setting up the stations within your room calls for good organization and creativity, but once the basic organization is done, the lessons virtually run themselves. It takes students a short period of time to adjust to the schedule, but they seem to like it. I run a stationing unit approximately one week out of six or seven. Further, I am able to work with a small group of students better and to answer individual questions when they arise.

Figure I is a sample Stationing Schedule I have used in reading classes. The various activities on the chart are described to the students as follows:

INDEPENDENT READING. Thirty minutes of laboratory practice reading with the shadowscope. Write a summary.

INFERENCE A lesson dealing with inference (as has previously been introduced in class) will be provided for you. You will be given a short story to read for general content. Begin reading as soon as you receive your material. In ten minutes I will be with your group to discuss the story and inferences. You will then proceed to answer the written questions to be completed by the end of the hour.

VOCABULARY. Vocabulary lesson on tape. This lesson is designed to improve your ability to use words in context and to listen. You will be given a list of words in a short selection. The underlined words will be repeated on the tape. Then each word will be used in a sentence on the tape. Write down the meaning

Figure I.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
GROUP A	IND. RDG.	INFERENCE	VOCAB.	TIMED RDG. & CONT. RDR.
GROUP B	TIMED RDG.	IND. RDG.	INFERENCE	VOCAB.
GROUP C	VOCAB.	TIMED RDG. CONT. RDR.	IND. RDG.	INFERENCE
GROUP D	INFERENCE	VOCAB.	TIMED RDG. & CONT. RDR.	IND. RDG.

of the word. The second part of the tape will present five new root words and their meanings. Write down the root words as they are presented to you, then find examples of each.

TIMED READING AND CONTROLLED READER LESSON. The first ten minutes of the class period I will preview the vocabulary words and key ideas in the controlled reader selection. I will then run the filmstrip. Turn to page 3 and do the questions. When you have completed the comprehension questions for the filmstrip, go directly to the timed reading. The article you are to read is listed on the blackboard. Time yourself, figure how many words per minute you have read, then go on to complete the comprehension questions. I will check your work with my answer key at the end of the class period.

These directions should be written for students to refer to, but they should be introduced orally as well. One of the best ways to learn to read is by following directions. Give specific directions students can follow without you telling them how to do it each step of the way. Allow them to sort out some confusion and depend on themselves for some of the answers.

Another advantage stationing provides is that you can adjust lessons with abilities. If Group A, for example, is a high-powered reading group, you may use a more advanced controlled reader filmstrip with them at a high rate. Group C, on the other hand, might be slower readers, so you could use another less complicated filmstrip and run it at a different speed. This changing of lessons to meet the various abilities of the students can follow through with all of the lessons in a stationing unit.

There have been times, too, when I have grouped students at random, rather than by ability, and have found more able students automatically "tutoring" those who need help and forming friendships that otherwise might not exist. The vocabulary lessons I have put on tape for my own purposes, which you may also do, but there are plenty of workbook type assignments or "canned" materials available which could be quite effective when used in a stationing unit.

The remainder of this article consists of variations on the stationing theme. Figure 2 shows a sample room layout for this kind of program. As you can see, a variety of assignments and room designs are possible with stationing. You can adjust the method to the room, to the materials, and to the students you have. Figure 3 shows the stationing schedule for an interdisciplinary unit on American studies, along with sample assignments. Figure 4 is a stationing unit for freshman science. I hope these samples help to show how stationing can be adapted for any reading unit the teacher wants to offer.

Figure II.

ORGANIZATION OF CLASSROOM FOR STATIONING UNIT

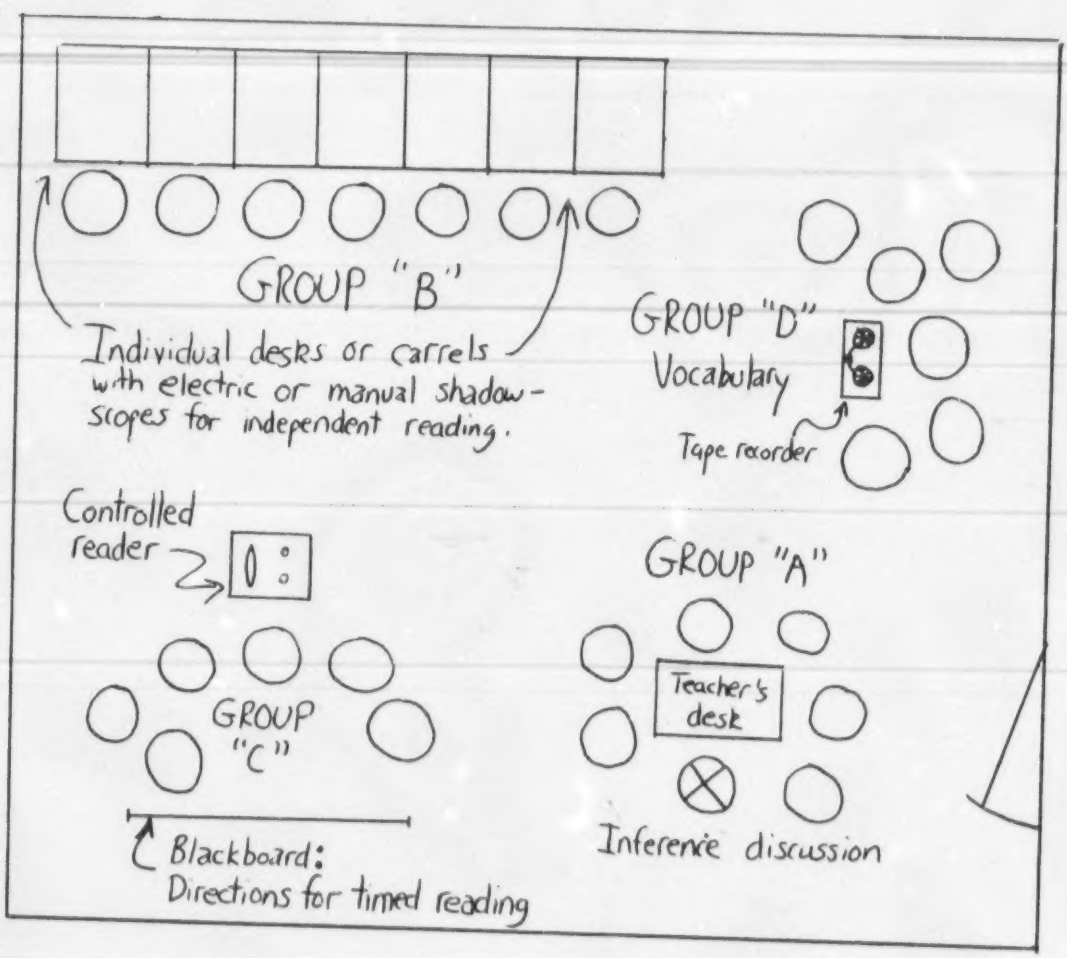

Figure III.

STATIONING SCHEDULE FOR AMERICAN STUDIES
Unit on the Constitution with Outside Biography Reading

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
GROUP A	READ & WRITE	DISCUSS	LIBRARY	QUIZ
GROUP B	QUIZ	READ & WRITE	DISCUSS	LIBRARY
GROUP C	LIBRARY	QUIZ	READ & WRITE	DISCUSS
GROUP D	READ & WRITE	LIBRARY	DISCUSS	QUIZ

Key to Assignments:

Read and Write. Each group will be given an essay or pamphlet to read about some aspect of the Constitution. You are to read the material carefully, then answer study questions which will be provided for you. Bring these written questions with you for a general panel discussion on Friday.

Discuss. So the teacher has an opportunity to make sure you understand the Constitution and the outside material you have read, I will meet with each group to discuss the essays and answer any questions you have from your reading.

Library. In addition to the textbook reading and classroom discussion, you were asked to briefly research an important contributor to the Constitution. You may use any reference materials, magazine articles from the Reader's Guide, bicentennial publications, encyclopedias, etc. in our library. Read a minimum of ten pages about the person (say, Thomas Jefferson) you have selected. Take notes. This reading will be the basis for a biographical sketch you will write later.

Quiz. Last week we read and discussed Chapter X in the textbook. We also saw a filmstrip for which you are responsible. The quiz will contain twenty-five objective questions and two essay questions (short answer) on this material.

Figure IV.

STATIONING UNIT FOR FRESHMAN SCIENCE

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY
GROUP A	READ	DISCUSS	FILMSTRIP	CURRENT EVENTS
GROUP B	CURRENT EVENTS	READ	DISCUSS	FILMSTRIP
GROUP C	FILMSTRIP	CURRENT EVENTS	READ	DISCUSS
GROUP D	READ	INDEPENDENT PROJECT	CURRENT EVENTS	DISCUSS

Read. Read Chapter on Weather Patterns in your textbook. Homework: Read pages 14-17 in Junior Science Magazine. Take notes on both reading assignments. Bring your notes to discussion.

Discuss. Your group will meet with me for most of the hour to discuss the key ideas in the chapter and to review any vocabulary you may not understand.

Current Events. You have been given the assignment of keeping a current events notebook for scientific events. Record what you have found in the field of science in the news this week and write your analysis/reaction. Keep in mind that later in the semester we will research and write a mini-biography on an important person in the field of science, past or present, so try to look through your material to see what may be used.

Filmstrip. A forty-minute filmstrip will be shown to you on Weather Patterns in the United States. The filmstrip is organized in a cause-effect relationship pattern. Make two columns on a sheet of paper and label them "Causes" and "Effects", then take notes on the filmstrip. I will collect these at the end of the hour.

Independent Project. Five students in this class are working on individual projects chosen three weeks ago. You may use the class time alloted to work in class, in the animal laboratory or in the library. A paragraph summary of what you observed or learned today will be handed in on Wednesday.

A classic is something that everybody wants to have read and nobody wants to read.

--Mark Twain
The Disappearance of Literature

TEACHING CRITICAL READING IN THE WRITING CLASS

Susan J. Judy
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For students in my composition courses, learning how to read is as important as learning how to write. Because I use a workshop approach in teaching writing, students are continually being asked to read and respond to their peers' notes, rough drafts, and final papers, and in doing so, they are developing advanced reading/thinking skills: the ability to recognize the main focus or major issue of a paper (or the lack of one); the ability to discern the difference between abstractions and concrete details; the ability to distinguish between telling evidence and trivia; the ability to make judgments about logical connections or relationships; and the ability to ask questions of a writer's intentions.

Five of the reader response activities I have used promote both better reading and better writing. Writers are able to receive feedback about how their writing is being understood and assessed by others. The readers learn to read carefully and sensitively, reacting to what they read and describing that reaction precisely.

Reading Aloud. Although oral reading is not recommended for young readers who tend to become text-bound, word-for-word readers, it can be useful with older readers who need to look more closely at the writing of their peers. In fact, one of the first problems I face when I ask students to respond to a paper by one of their peers, is that the readers often give the paper a cursory examination and a facile response. Therefore, when they come to class with rough drafts to share, I ask them to begin by having the writer read the paper aloud. Though students are seldom willing or able to hear quickly enough to make comments at the end of the reading, they don't miss anything this way. The student who has written the paper, as well as those listening to the reading, is able to catch everything from huge leaps in reasoning to missing transitions to repetitions of words to choppiness of sentence structure to fragments when reading the paper aloud.

After the students have heard every word of the paper one time, I ask them to read the papers in their small groups to themselves and make comments. Readers are then able to draw on information gained from the oral reading and from the silent reading to give the author suggestions about how the paper might be improved.

The Running Commentary. Another technique I use early in the term to push students toward more careful reading is the running commentary. Again, students exchange their rough drafts, and rather than just asking them to read and respond

to their partner's paper, I have them write a line by line reaction. I developed this idea, adapting from Peter Elbow's Writing Without Teachers, for two reasons: Too often, when I have asked students to comment on others' papers, they have commented on the mechanics of the paper or they have made very general summary statements about the paper: "I really liked this paper. You had a lot of good arguments." In writing a running commentary, they become more concrete, more specific, even if they aren't able to comment on each line. A second advantage of having them react in this way is that they can point out difficulties with the paper without sounding critical. Students are reluctant to "criticize" someone else's paper, but in the running commentary their focus is on themselves as readers with their particular responses to the paper, rather than as judges and critics.

The following example of a running commentary shows the reader responding to a paper in a variety of ways. She interprets the symbols and metaphors the author uses, she makes judgments about the structure and development of the composition, and she recognizes and appreciates the author's use of language to build suspense:

Introduction: I like the introduction a lot, it makes the reader curious about what the nightmare was about.

In telling how your cabin is, maybe you could get into how you felt about it, if you liked living like this or if you would rather have stayed home.

The part where it is leading up to where you invited Debbie, it is a little bit drawn out, about swimming and diving.

The part about getting it all accomplished, it seems like it is repeated in another part.

After hearing something and being too scared to look and then getting far enough away then looking and finding out it wasn't a bear is good. It makes the reader want to continue reading to find out really what it is.

The idea of you looking out for Debbie is good. You told her to run and it was you who got into trouble.

The part of you could see fire off my shoes gives an idea of how fast you really did climb.

The dream goes along with the real life part of it. The loft is the tree, the slippers were the bear.

The ending is good, you went back to bed and continued dreaming but not about bears.

Overall the paper is good. It takes a long time to get to the dream but I feel that you need everything to get the real feeling of the dream.

The running commentary gives the reader an opportunity to make contact with a writer. The reader says both "I heard you" and "I'd like to hear you better."

Description of the Author. For the immature reader/writer, egocentricity sometimes gets in the way of writing and understanding what has been written. Writers assume that everyone has shared their experience and thus tend to develop papers less than they need to. Readers tend to read about a generalized situation or idea and assume that the writer's experience or ideas are similar or identical to their own. To encourage readers to make their sense of the author clear, I have asked them to write a description of the author. I then ask the readers to share that description so that the writers can see if that is the way they intended to present themselves.

The following description of the author was written on the basis of a fantasy/dream paper in which a student described an experience of leaving her body at a time when she was extremely depressed:

> *From this paper, I can make no conclusions as to the author's appearance. I cannot even tell if this paper was written by a male or female. I am totally blank as to his/her appearance.*
>
> *Some of the personality traits that I can see of the author are: confusion between him/herself--not really knowing who they really are. (When under this emotional strain they described.) I can also see a pessimistic "down on myself" feeling by the author.*
>
> *I think that this person valued the time of his/her "journey" into the unknown. They had a good time being with these people that they missed.*
>
> *I would like to know more about where you were. Was it heaven? You should clarify this. I think you can improve the paper by clarifying the above.*

Because I maintain the anonymity of the author until after the readers have written their descriptions, the readers can make no assumptions on the basis of what they already know about the author. After the description has been written, I reveal the authors of the papers, and reader and writer get together to discuss the accuracy of the description. It is at that point that the readers discover to what extent they have "recreated" the author on the basis of the text, and to what extent they have ignored, overlooked, or distorted the author because of imprecise reading, past experience, or prejudices about the subject matter. At the same time, the authors learn how they must write precisely in order to avoid misreadings that result from incomplete or underdeveloped description or explanation.

Oral and Written Critiques. Students' critical reading abilities are developed most fully when they are asked to read and critique their peers' drafts in order to help them improve their papers. Critiques are done in two forms: oral and written. I distribute copies of papers to the entire class and ask

them to read and respond to them, making suggestions for revision. In addition, I assign three to five people to write their critiques for one of the papers. The next class period, students come prepared to discuss several papers, and written responses are also due.

Early in the term, I do most of the talking, describing what I liked and thought was successful about the paper and suggesting ways in which it might be improved. I encourage others to share their reactions to the paper, whether those reactions be confusion over the meaning of the paper, arguments counter to those presented, additional evidence that might be used, similar experiences with different outcomes that readers have had, or questions and suggestions about more effective structure or development. Both the discussions and the written reactions to the paper become lengthier and cover a wider variety of issues as students become more competent readers, more sure of their own sense of the qualities of good writing, and more able to describe those qualities to someone else. I also encourage divergent reactions, allowing people to use both personal experience and the text as support for their analyses and their sense of how to improve the composition.

As students share their critiques of the paper with one another, they learn not only about techniques for making their writing stronger and more interesting, but also about how to see more, gain more from what they read--not just in their peers' writing, but professional writing as well. They learn to look for the main focus, mood, or tone of a piece of writing; they distinguish between motivated and unmotivated action; they demand concrete details and telling evidence; they ask questions when they feel that logic is weak or information is lacking. The following critiques show readers asking questions and probing into the meaning of papers and making suggestions for how the authors might improve their compositions. The first critique was written in response to a paper on unwanted pregnancy illustrated with a narrative about a friend's abortion. The critic responds:

> *Why was it her main concern to keep the pregnancy secret from her parents and boyfriend? If it was a main concern you should have told more about it. Also why weren't the questions not easy for her to answer, needs more detail. If your friend opened up to questions such as those you raised, "Was she taking a life?" etc., what were her feelings, thoughts, moods? Did she cry? shrug it off? Maybe you could have included part of a conversation showing her point of view. It needs more of her expression, you telling us doesn't make me feel for her or the paper. Playing with fire, getting burnt, time to pay, isn't that a little blunt for the situation? When you tell the reader the more she wanted to do for the next few years, the less she wanted to start a family. MORE!!! You go through the whole paper without actually knowing what her real feelings are. You tell the reader her decision was abortion because it was the only way. WHY? MORE. You say your friend was pressured by her conscience and his beliefs. Needs more to tell how. This paper wasn't developed nearly enough. Each paragraph you jump into a different thought. The thought flow in order but they aren't nearly developed enough. I can't feel for your friend unless I really understand everything clearly. I'm glad your friend*

had a happy (sort of) ending with her boyfriend, but what was her final decision? I also think that your conclusion shouldn't be in a summary form. Maybe you could have made the concluding paragraph something like what your friend is doing now. Married, pregnant, dead. I'd also like to point out that it was a tough idea to display. Showing all your friend's feelings is tough because you yourself cannot really put them into precise words, the words which make a good paper.

A second critique was written in response to a personal experience paper about an operation:

It was very hard for me to relate to this experience because the last operation I had was when I was three or four and had my tonsils out and I don't remember that very well.

It was hard to understand what, exactly was going on, at first--yes, I knew it was some type of operation--but it seems that you could have elaborated a bit more. It is kind of a strange situation to write about and to explain, I know it is hard to remember everything that went on during the operation, or before the operation because of the anesthetic.

The beginning sentence was sort of choppy, but yet quite descriptive.

To revise it you might tell what they were doing to you, not the gory details--but what was really going on behind the curtains when you were wondering. It seems like if you were having an operation this day and age you would know exactly what they were doing to you.

It is kind of confusing why you had to "roll on your side and curled into a ball," is that standard procedure for an operation or just something you did because it hurt? What kind of swab was it? Explain the pain when they gave you the spinal anesthetic. It is a good description about the anesthetic taking effect.

In both their oral and written reactions to others' writings, students learn a great deal about the act of reading and the act of writing. They learn that different readers respond differently, that some notice things that others don't (in structure, style, tone, focus, etc.), that some readings are more precise and careful than others, that readers make different demands on the text, and that writers have many choices to make in deciding how to meet the demands or the anticipated demands of the reader. As readers and as writers, students learn the responsibility that both of those roles entail in making meaning via print.

Letters to Authors. Although readers usually respond to drafts or in-process papers in my writing class, two times during the semester I have them react to final drafts. At midterm and at the end of the term I have students select a paper to revise for inclusion in a class booklet. In the past I never did much with the books after I distributed them, although students read through them and talked about them informally. Recently, I have asked students to write

letters to authors, expressing their reactions to their pieces. At this point, I tell the readers their job is not to try to help the writer improve the paper, but to express their appreciation of the paper and to share thoughts and feelings with the author, person to person. The following letters were written to an author in response to a paper he wrote about a dream that he was dead:

Dear Howard,

I really enjoyed reading your paper. It made me think about when we die will our souls be watching over our bodies until we're buried? It's spooky, and the ending, the last line "Suddenly horror came to my face as I realized I was looking at myself" is terrific. I love it. I really think you had a good idea to wait to tell the readers that you are the one in the casket. The story leaves people with a scarey feeling.

I've never had a dream like this before. I've dreamt that I was the last person on earth, but never that I was the one to die.

Your story shows how strong your family ties are. When everyone was crying and your sister puts her favorite necklace in the casket I almost cried.

I think you had a good effect on the force pulling you toward the casket. I picture you floating sort of. It adds to the story nicely.

Thank you for writing this story. I enjoyed reading it.

Howard,

I feel that your paper was really done well!! And after reading through the booklet I think it's the best paper in there. All the details fell into place neatly. I've had dreams in which I couldn't get others' attention, it is very frustrating. The paper has excellent organization which I think is the reason that it makes it interesting.

In both the teaching of reading and of writing, we need to move away from the teacher as the final judge and arbiter. If we want students to develop critical abilities in reading and writing, then we need to provide them with opportunities to work on those abilities. Recognizing that critical skills develop gradually, we need to give students time to grow and acceptance of their embryonic efforts. Certainly, we can't expect their standards to be identical with our own, and, in fact, the classroom is richer for the diversity our students can offer.

EVERY TEACHER IS A TEACHER OF READING

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Every teacher is a teacher of reading. Mention this to a group of secondary teachers and one is sure to find more hostile than supportive reactions. Most of these professionals are content teachers who are trained in depth in their chosen speciality area but have little or no knowledge of how to handle their students' reading problems. The majority of these teachers feel it is the responsibility of elementary teachers and reading specialists to provide instruction in reading. They might argue that they chose to be content specialists, not reading specialists, and in the same breath, complain of the faulty reading reading performances of students in their classes who, they feel, have been poorly prepared for the reading demanded of them in content areas. Marksheffel (1969) comments:

> *Content teachers do not always take kindly to the proposal that they teach reading in their areas. Some flatly reject the idea and refuse to give it further consideration. Others ask, "Why can't the English teacher or a reading teacher teach students to read and leave the teaching of subject matter to me?" (p. 128)*

The situation is a common one. Reading specialists continue to maintain that every teacher must help teach reading if all students are to read to their potential. Content teachers argue that content, not reading, is their sole responsibility. Universities continue to graduate many teachers who are prepared in content areas but have no skills to help them reach their many students who need assistance in refining their reading. And yet, for all this controversy, studies like one conducted by Vacca (1975) continue to indicate that unless content teachers involve themselves in teaching reading skills, students will be robbed of not only the opportunity to reach their potential as critical readers but the chance to be active participants in the learning process.

The secondary school teacher can assume that the student entering the 7th or 9th grade has had much reading instruction. He or she has been introduced to, practiced, and mastered a countless number of reading skills. However, most of these skills have been taught in isolation from content. The emphasis has been placed on the skill to be mastered, not on the content of the passages used. Print has been used only as a means to the end--mastery of the skill. Too often reading instruction for slow readers in secondary schools has typically concentrated on the same thing--mastery of skills in isolation from content. Though this is necessary for development of the basic reading skills, Palmer (1975) has stated:

> *The development of reading competence is best achieved when the student's focus is on the content of the material and not on the reading itself .... Psychology of learning has long pointed out that what is taught is most effective within the context in which it is used. (p. 44)*

Nevertheless, teachers in middle or high schools often wrongly assume that the use of these skills taught in isolation will automatically transfer to print read in content areas. Actually, this transfer seldom occurs if left to chance. Students have to be taught to transfer the skills they already possess to new material. In defense of teaching for transfer, Bullerman and Franco (1975) have stated:

> *... both the remedial and developmental aspects of reading have been taught in isolation, with a sublime faith that skills will be automatically applied to reading tasks in all disciplines. No systematic instruction in reading/study skills suited to various subject areas has been carried out. If secondary and adult students are to be able to complete homework assignments or benefit from classroom instruction, it will be because competent teachers have given instruction and practice in gaining information from the printed page. (p. 21)*

Another good reason for making reading instruction a responsibility of the content teacher is that certain skills are more easily taught in the reading tasks of the subject. For instance, while an English teacher may need to strengthen students' ability to draw inferences, explore the connotations of descriptive language, or analyze the style of a selection, a science teacher would be more likely to require the understanding of technical vocabulary (and thus, concepts) or the understanding of literal statements. Smith (1963) comments:

> *... there are unique differences in skills used in different subject matter fields, and ... while general reading ability is operative in all reading to a certain extent, there is also definite need for development of specific skills to use in the different curriculum areas. (p. 309)*

Similarly, Newsome (1976) writes:

> *The transfer of reading skills to the content area is avoided or minimized when the content teacher is teaching the skill related to the specific area. The best place to teach reading skills related to science, math, social studies, and literature is in the respective instructional period. (p. 26)*

One of the specific skills that requires constant emphasis in secondary content areas is vocabulary development through various word attack skills. In the elementary school, students are taught largely to read words that are already in their aural-oral vocabulary. They learn to use word attack skills on words that they already know. They are not expected, for the most part, to use these skills on unknown words which require them to understand new concepts. But this need changes drastically when the student reaches secondary

schools and new concepts in many different content areas must be learned largely through the comprehension of print. To facilitate learning in this area, Olive Niles recommends:

> *A major responsibility of all content teachers is to develop many new concepts with which printed words may be associated .... The emphasis then shifts to developing new meanings. This is a natural and fruitful area in the teaching of reading for all content teachers since each time a new word is taught, a new concept has been taught. Hence, there is a total melding of the teaching of reading and the teaching of content--they are actually one and the same thing. (p. 5)*

Taking this argument one step further, in content learning situations students are not only asked to understand the concepts behind words, they are also expected to develop thoughts about the content based on the print. They are asked to process the print to which they have been exposed and synthesize it into a meaningful whole. This is virtually an impossibility if the material is not first comprehended. Total comprehension is much more than just recall of many literal details in the print, yet it appears in many traditionally taught subject matter classes that this is all that is expected of students in study questions and discussion of text material. Students need guidance so that they can comprehend the important concepts in the print and get an opportunity to logically fit the pieces together into a meaningful pattern. Consider what Duffy (1974) has to say on the issue:

> *... reading involves both pronouncing words and thinking about what the words say. While a content teacher can justifiably excuse himself for not teaching basic word recognition skills, he cannot deny a responsibility for teaching his students to think. Consequently, every teacher in the middle school must know the thinking skills that are required in his content and must possess the instructional competence to develop these skills with his students, whether it is in a listening situation or a reading situation. Thinking <u>is</u> comprehension, and whether a student comprehends depends largely upon whether he understands the interpretive demands of the rhetoric he faces in a given content area. Teaching the child to understand specialized content material is an integral part of being a content teacher and the responsibility cannot be dodged. (p. 4)*

Hahn (1967) also comments on this issue, relating it to the erroneous assumption by many content teachers that students are mature readers when they reach the secondary level. He writes:

> *This much is known. Very few young people enter high school as mature readers for they are still in the process of developing skills, attitudes, and knowledge necessary to read and learn with instruction or on their own. If these students are to receive a sizable dividend for the time and effort they invest in reading, particularly in new and strange content areas, they need consistent guidance in organizing and extending the knowledge and skills they already possess. (p. 52)*

I believe content teachers should re-evaluate their negative attitudes and realize that they are, in fact, the experts in teaching reading in their area. How can they expect the reading specialist, who as an individual has his or her own interests and strengths, to teach students equally well the reading skills needed in every subject matter class? How, for instance, can a reading specialist who was originally an English teacher with limited ability in math, adequately help the student whose reading problem is the interpretation of story problems in math? The answer is simple--it can't be done. We cannot teach what we cannot do ourselves. This is perhaps the strongest argument why the content teacher is the best person to teach the skills necessary in the disciplines. He or she possesses them and constantly uses them himself. Sargent (1969) states this clearly:

> *... the content teacher is the best-qualified person in the school for teaching reading in his subject. He is the one who 1) is most capable in teaching the new vocabulary in his subject, 2) is most knowledgeable in setting purposes for reading, 3) is most able in developing and motivating student interest, 4) is most adept in identifying important concepts to be arrived at, 5) is most conversant with multi-resources, their use and value in developing background experiences, and 6) is familiar enough with the text to know how best to read and study it. (p. 17)*

Secondary content teachers would agree that success in school, and especially success in the subject areas, requires success in reading. A poor reader, most feel, will be a poor learner, and research supports their beliefs. For instance, a study done some time ago by Penty (1959) revealed that three times as many poor readers as good readers dropped out of school, with the peak of the drop-outs coming in the tenth grade. Karlin (1972) also comments:

> *The relationship of reading ability to scholastic success is not open to dispute; teachers and students alike are aware of it .... The high school curriculum often presents problems in reading that are difficult to solve. Achievement in reading is necessary to achievement in school, and when no provision is made for achievement by the poor reader, that student eventually is frustrated into a miserable state of failure. (p. 15)*

Content teachers who recognize the need for success in reading and who want their students' reading ability to improve should, however, consider two things in light of such research. First, if reading specialists are the only teachers who can help students with reading problems all day long, how many periods a day do students meet success? One? Just the reading period? Or, is a poor reader's success there (provided he or she meets success there) enough to improve chances for success in the other five or six classes? Does it not make more sense to give that student a chance for success in every class by providing guidance in every content area?

Content teachers often fail to realize that students are given many different kinds of reading assignments every day, each of which requires the use of different kinds of skills. All students do not read equally well in all

content areas, since they do not use all skills equally well. Even so-called "good readers" use some reading skills better than they use others. Further, all students are not interested in every subject matter class they take. Often this happens because the school forces them into taking required classes in which they have little or no interest. Teachers need only consider themselves if they want to understand how a student feels in this situation. Would the gym teacher, for instance, want to have taken a college major in the French language? What problems would they themselves encounter if they were once again forced to take classes in which they had no knowledge or interest? How successful would they be if they were given no handles with which to get a grasp of the strange subject matter? Olive Niles throws some light on this subject:

> *Secondary teachers know that student success in content areas depends on a student's ability to read well. Though they know this fact well .... because they are all specialists, usually in just one subject area, they often forget the concomitant fact that Student X has to shift gears in his reading again and again as he moves during the day from one subject area to another.*
>
> *We can make the situation somewhat less threatening if, as a group of teachers, we can see the elements which are common to the study of all kinds of materials and if we can help Student X to understand that there are important similarities as well as differences between a method of study appropriate, for example, to reading the poem and a corresponding method of study appropriate to solving the algebra problem. (p. 3)*

In terms of benefits for students, who are the individuals to whom teachers have primary responsibility, there seems to be no logical argument contrary to the need of teaching reading in every content area. However, content teachers must themselves be shown how to teach the necessary reading skills in their classes. If an all-school developmental reading program were started in every middle and high school, content teachers would probably be amazed to find that their seemingly lazy students could actually be motivated to read well, to think clearly, to discuss logically, and most important, to learn successfully.

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I'm not a speed reader.
I'm a speed understander.

--Isaac Asimov
New York Times

PARENT-TEACHER COOPERATION PAYS OFF

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At the beginning of each school year, I usually invite the parents of students in my first grade class to a meeting at which I discuss my plans for the year. Last September as I planned the meeting, I selected as my key goal making a special commitment to reading. I wanted all my children to read and to use reading. I realized achieving such a goal could be a long and arduous task, considering that a teacher's time and talent goes into so many subjects and activities besides reading. Then I considered--why do it all alone? Why not get help from parents of children enrolled in the class? With this in mind, at the beginning of the school year, I asked parents not only for their support, but for their help with classroom instruction as well.

To stress the fact that parent involvement is extremely important, I wrote H.E.L.P. on the blackboard, and explained that these letters stood for "Have Every Layperson Participate." I then reviewed the entire reading program for the coming year, beginning with reading readiness, methods to be used in classroom reading instruction, reward systems to be used and other aspects of the reading program. Most parents were surprised to discover just how much first graders are expected to learn, and amazed at the effort that goes into a total reading program. I discussed other class activities and objectives, but my major stress was on the reading program.

At the end of the presentation, I asked parents to sign a sheet as they left the room if they were interested in helping. To my surprise, there were fourteen names on the list. This was a far greater number than I had expected at the outset since there were only twenty three children in the classroom, and an excellent response to my call for H.E.L.P.

Now that the recruitment of lay participants was assured, there was the problem of getting them organized to get maximum benefits for the time they were to spend in helping students. In order to accomplish this, I held a workshop for the interested parents. The purpose was to introduce various techniques of instruction that parents could use in order to reinforce concepts I would be teaching in the classroom. I decided to have one parent participate for one-and-a-half hours each morning during the term. I created a work area just outside the classroom for use by the lay assistants. Here I gathered all supplies that would be needed, readily accessible to the parent participating that day. The class was divided into five reading groups. In addition, three children were receiving individual help. The parent for the day would work with one of the reading groups in the work area while I worked with another group in the classroom.

The remaining students went to one of the instructional centers in the classroom. I found that this grouping was not only efficient for the reading instruction, but that children enjoyed the small mini-classes. Discipline took care of itself. As each of us completed working with one group, we moved to another and worked closely with it. Volunteer parents concentrated on reinforcing the concepts taught. They used word games, flash cards, workbooks; they listened to students read, and, in turn, read to students. Especially helpful was the immediate feedback to students when they had completed written assignments. Parent volunteers had time to go over individual papers with students, pointing out errors or omissions, suggesting corrections, and giving praise when the work was well done.

Children like to know when they are doing well and are anxious to find out what they are doing wrong. In this type of program, the children get more occasions to receive warm fuzzies (compliments) from both the parent volunteers and the teacher. It is especially important, I believe, to give praise when students have done a good job or have tried unusually hard to achieve success. It is through praise that learning to read is reinforced.

I provided a journal similar to a teacher's lesson plan booklet for use of parent volunteers. In it were the detailed lessons for the day for each of the reading groups, a place for parents to record information on group progress and to list which students, if any, might benefit from additional help from the teacher. Parents also recorded the amount of time spent with each group. For at least one-half hour each week, a U.S.S.R. (Unified Sustained Silent Reading) was included in the program, allowing students in all the reading groups to choose a book to read silently. These book selections were checked out by the volunteer parents and myself, and we made every attempt to select only books that individual students could read without difficulty. In addition, every other week, a few students from higher grade levels were allowed to come into the classroom and read to the first grade class or listen to them read.

Originally, I planned to rotate the parent volunteers at the end of the first semester, bringing in new people and retiring the veterans. But the first group of parents became so interested and involved in the program and so surprised to see how rapidly and how much first grade students accomplish in reading that they wanted to stay on for the remainder of the school year. Therefore, I organized the new parents to assist in reinforcing mathematical skills in the afternoon class sessions, in much the same way the first group had been organized for assisting in the reading program.

Students seemed thrilled to have an interested parent working with them each day, but the day they enjoyed the most was the day that a father came to help. He said that after he had heard his wife and her friends talking about the program, he wanted to participate, too.

As the school year progressed, several parents stayed for longer periods each day and began to help with other subjects, too. It seemed obvious that the program was a success, demonstrated by both the enthusiasm of the parents involved and by the overall acceptance by the children in the class. It now remained to determine just how well such a program had affected the students. In May, the school's reading consultant administered the Gates-McGinitie Reading Achievement

Test to the first grade students involved. Twenty-two students were present for the test, and the results were revealing. The grade equivalents for reading comprehension were as follows:

Seven students "topped out" with a perfect score of 3.7.

Two students achieved a score of 3.6.

Four students achieved a score of 3.4.

Two students achieved a score of 3.2.

One student achieved a score of 3.1.

One student achieved a score of 2.3.

Two students achieved a score of 2.1.

Two students achieved a score of 1.9. (Grade level)

One student had a score of 1.6 (3 months below grade level)

Since the test given measures only to the 3.7 level, no judgment beyond that level for the "topped out" students can be made, but it can be assumed that at least a few of those students were reading beyond the 3.7 level. Of course, not all of this success can be attributed to the parent volunteer program, but there can be no doubt that goals for the reading program had been met with ease.

In June, I sent a note to parents requesting volunteers to ride the bus and assist with the year-end class picnic. I assumed that several would be willing to help. Fourteen mothers and one father showed up at the bus on the day of the picnic. Not only had the reading program been successful, but it had been a real plus in school-parent relations.

What was important, I think, was for me as a teacher to experience how very important parents are to the school community and what can be accomplished through parent-teacher cooperation. I have every intention of carrying on a similar kind of program during the coming year.

Books are not absolutely dead things, but do contain a potency of life in them as active as that soul whose progeny they are; nay, they do preserve as in a vial the purest efficacy and extraction of that living intellect that bred them.

--John Milton
Areopagitica